

REMARKS

Reconsideration of this application, as amended, is requested.

Claims 1-10 remain in the application. All of the original claims have been amended to eliminate the numeric references. Numeric references are not required under U.S. patent law and are given no patentable weight. Accordingly, the amendment to eliminate the numeric references is not a narrowing amendment and is not an amendment entered for purposes of patentability.

Independent claims 1 and 8 have been amended to define the invention more clearly.

Claims 1-3 and 6 were rejected under 35 USC 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,494,732 to Kashiya et al. The Examiner identified elements of the Kashiya et al. reference that were considered to correspond to the elements recited in original claim 1. In this regard, the Examiner considered the element 22 of Kashiya et al. to be the housing and considered the element 21 to be the slider. Biasing members 23 were considered to be between the housing 22 and the slider 21. The housing 22 was considered by the Examiner to be connectable with a mating housing 2. The Examiner further concluded that the housing 22 has a pushable portion and an escape groove as originally claimed. However, the numbers in the Office Action do not correspond to any numbers presented in Kashiya et al.

The elements of Kashiya et al. that are identified in the Office Action all are part of a single connector. The slider of Kashiya et al. is actually a two-part slider that is mounted in a cavity of the housing 2 above the terminal receiving portions of the housing 2. No part of the second slide member 22 of Kashiya et al. has

terminal-receiving cavities. No part of the first slide member 21 of Kashiya et al. has a rearwardly open escape groove. No part of the second slide member 22 of Kashiya et al. could be considered a pushable portion that is received in a rearwardly facing escape groove in the first slide member.

In contrast, the invention defined by amended claim 1 has a housing with a front end that is connectable with the mating housing, a rear end and at least one cavity extending between the front and rear ends for receiving a terminal fitting. Additionally, the housing of amended claim 1 has at least one pushable portion that is configured for receiving a forward pushing force for connecting the housing with the mating housing. Amended claim 1 further defines a slider that is movable with respect to the housing. The slider is formed with at least one escape groove for receiving the pushable portion of the housing. It is submitted that the invention defined by amended claims 1-3 and 6 is not taught or suggested by Kashiya et al.

Claims 1 and 3-9 were rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,993,967 to Matsumoto. The Examiner interpreted Matsumoto as showing a housing A that is connectable with a mating housing B. The Examiner considered the housing A to be telescoped with a slider C that is movable with respect to the housing A. The Examiner stated that the housing A has a pushable portion 5. Additionally, the Examiner stated that the slider has an escape groove 12a.

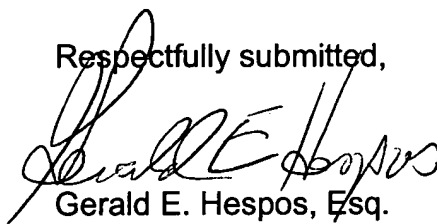
It is submitted, with respect, that the housing A is not telescoped with the slider C. The element 12a is not a rearwardly open groove for receiving the element 5 that the Examiner compares to the pushable portion. Rather, the aperture 12a must have a closed end so that the locking projection 5a can be engaged in the aperture 12a

to hold the Matsumoto assembly in a connected state. It is submitted that the invention defined by claims 1 and 3-9, as amended, is not taught or suggested by Matsumoto. The revisions that would be required to bring Matsumoto closer to the claimed invention would make Matsumoto inoperative for performing its stated functions.

The applicant and the assignee are pleased to note that the Examiner considers claim 10 to be allowable as filed. Claim 10 has been amended into independent form with all the limitations of claim 8. Accordingly, claim 10 is believed to be in condition for allowance.

The Examiner is urged to contact applicant's attorney at the number below to expedite the prosecution of this application.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gerald E. Hespos", is written over the typed name.

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